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RIVIERA NAYARIT FACT SHEET

General Description:

Riviera Nayarit, Mexico's newest tourism region, encompasses more than 100 miles of pristine coastline and beaches, traditional coastal towns and villages and beachfront luxury resort areas sheltered by the towering Sierra Madre mountains. Among its major attractions are Banderas Bay, one of the largest bays in the world and home to our most developed area of Nuevo Vallarta; the popular coastal village of San Blas; the exclusive Punta Mita luxury resort and residential area; a rich cultural tradition with pre-Hispanic and pre-Columbian history; and abundant and exotic species of protected wildlife, including sea turtles, humpback whales and tropical birds.

With average annual temperatures in the 80°F's / 27°C's, Riviera Nayarit is a year-round discovery, an authentic journey to the heart of Mexico's incomparable culture and natural beauty.

Riviera Nayarit is an ideal choice for beach relaxation, soft adventure, outdoor recreation, water sports, cultural exploration, excellent dining and total immersion in nature. Bird lovers will be surprised to learn that this region has the second highest number of North American birds in one location.

Location:

Riviera Nayarit is located in the state of Nayarit on Mexico's Pacific coast which unfolds just minutes north of the Puerto Vallarta International Airport.

Getting There:

Puerto Vallarta International Airport (PVR) is the nearest commercial air service to Nayarit - only 15 minutes south of Nuevo Vallarta and 40 minutes from Punta Mita.

Among the scheduled carriers serving the destination: Aero California, Aero Mexico, Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, America West, American Airlines, Continental, Delta, Mexicana, United Airlines, and US Airways.

Hotels: From the luxurious Four Seasons Resort Punta Mita and the St. Regis Resort, also in Punta Mita, opening in 2007, to charming boutique hotels clinging to the beaches, to impressive all inclusive resorts, Riviera Nayarit offers some 12,820 hotel rooms in every imaginable style and price category. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of available hotel accommodations can be found in the Banderas Bay region, with its numerous beaches, water sports and fishing. More than 8,000 rooms are in the 4-star to grand luxury categories.

Culture: Nayarit's cultural heritage encompasses four separate ethnic groups: Huicholes, Coras, Tepehuanos, and Mexicaneros. This heritage has led to a destination rich in traditional culinary traditions reflected in a wide variety of restaurants as well as popular cultural events and festivals, folklore and, of special importance to visitors, excellent shopping for traditional handicrafts and art.

Major Attractions: **Nuevo Vallarta:** Just north of Puerto Vallarta on the southern edge of Riviera Nayarit, travelers will find outstanding golf, large and small hotels, shopping, dolphin parks, a water park, a marina and some of the longest and widest beaches in the region.

Flamingos: An area of luxury hotels and condominiums centered around the famous "Flamingoes" golf course designed by Percy Clifford, with another championship golf course on the way.

Bucerías: The cobblestone streets, main square and numerous seafood restaurants and beach clubs in Bucerias provide the setting for a popular annual festival celebrating the "Virgen de la Paz" which includes the blessing of the fishing fleet.

La Cruz de Huanacastle: Another traditional fishing village with a large marina under construction to accommodate yachts of 400 feet. Rapidly growing, the town will soon have new boutique hotels, restaurants and shops.

Punta Mita: Historically significant as the site of the ancient Huichole Indians' annual spring festival, Punta Mita and its exceptional natural beauty has become the center of luxury resort development featuring such brands as Four Seasons and St. Regis, a new Jack Nicklaus golf course, a Deepak Chopra Center and luxury residential development attracting visitors from around the world.

Islas Marietas: Situated in the Banderas Bay, Islas Marietas is an island wildlife sanctuary, home to many endangered bird species as well as rare coral reefs.

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Major Attractions:

San Francisco (San Pancho): Is the home of the famous Polo Club which comes alive between November and May. In addition to polo, the town offers horseback riding, diving, climbing, yoga and jungle excursions. A new boutique hotel opened recently with a highly regarded restaurant serving fine Mexican cuisine.

Sayulita: Internationally recognized for its outstanding surfing, Sayulita, a somewhat Bohemian art community, also offers oceanside restaurants and cafes, luxurious villas and spas.

Lo de Marcos: A small town with a friendly atmosphere and outstanding beaches, restaurants serving authentic local food, bars and a new golf course under development.

Rincón de Guayabitos: Described as the “Hidden Pearl” among the beaches of Nayarit, Rincon features all the conveniences of modern life in a relaxing, traditional setting; an excellent option for fishing and diving.

San Blas: Birthplace of Junipero Serra, founder of the famous California Missions, the coastal village of San Blas is a rapidly growing tourism destination, thanks to its many beaches, a lively port, rich cultural heritage and an abundance of migratory bird populations which attract birders from around the world. The La Tovara National Park nearby is a federally protected mangrove forest accessible only by small boat.

Mexcaltitan: A small island of floating mangroves and lowlands that is reputed to be the legendary Aztlan, birthplace and home city of the Aztec civilization.

Activities:

Beaches: Over 100 miles of beaches of exceptional natural beauty

Golf: There are currently seven major golf courses in the region including four in Riviera Nayarit. Two additional courses will be opening in Riviera Nayarit by the end of the year. Among the high profile names associated with the development of championship golf in Riviera Nayarit are: Jack Nicklaus (Four Seasons Punta Mita), Percy Clifford (Flamingos Golf Club), Robert Von Hagge (El Tigre, Nuevo Vallarta), Jim Lipe (Mayan Golf Resort Vallarta), Greg Norman (Litibú opening late 2007), Tom Weiskopf and Joe Finger.

Spas: Hotel spas of world renowned status such as The Grand Velas Spa Resort among others, and independent facilities offer the latest in luxury spa treatments and services, creating virtually a “sensual paradise” for visitors looking to indulge themselves.

Ecotourism: A wide variety of activities ranging from whale watching, swimming with dolphins and adventures with seals to bird watching, excursions in the Sierra Madre mountains and canopy tours in subtropical jungles high above the ground. Throughout the year, there are also opportunities to observe efforts to preserve the giant sea turtle species that inhabit the Pacific waters.

Adventure Tourism: From scuba diving along the coast and in the Banderas Bay to snorkeling to Sierra Madre safaris, survival skills training and jungle adventures, Riviera Nayarit offers a wealth of educational and entertaining adventures.

Cultural Tourism: Centuries of history are featured in expeditions to pre-Hispanic and pre-Columbian cultural sites, mining towns, colonial cities, Mexcaltitlan, San Blas and other destinations. Visitors may join group tours or customize their own itineraries, with travel by air, land or boat. There are several traditional Huichol villages in the mountains and resort galleries display their colorful handicrafts, mostly animal figures made from beads pressed into wax.

Fishing: Riviera Nayarit is rapidly establishing itself as a major deep sea fishing destination, with world class catches of blue and black marlin, sailfish, yellow fin tuna and other species. Other seasons feature wahoo and Dorado and coastal sport fishing. In addition to an extensive fishing fleet available for charter, Riviera Nayarit also will host the 1st International Tuna and Marline Tournament this year in July.

Other recreational activities include surfing, swimming and sailing.

Cuisine:

Seafood reigns in Riviera Nayarit's cuisine including tangy ceviche, grilled red snapper, savory pastries filled with fresh crab or shrimp. The region holds an annual gastronomy festival each November.

Future:

Riviera Nayarit is in the beginning stages of a major tourism development. Between 2005 and 2007, government has invested 1.5 billion in tourism facilities and infrastructure. Of the 20 projects currently in development, 15% of the investment is from the U.S.

Among the projects in progress is Litibú, a high-end development featuring boutique hotels, a marina, heliport, shopping centers and golf courses.

Increase in hotel capacity is a major component of the growth program. Estimated number of rooms in Banderas Bay for the year 2010 is 11,000 (up from some 8,000 currently). Other hotel capacities within the next four years include:

- Litibú: 3,800
- Punta Mita: 1,000
- Nuevo Vallarta & Flamingos: 2,000

Website:

www.VisitRivieraNayarit.com